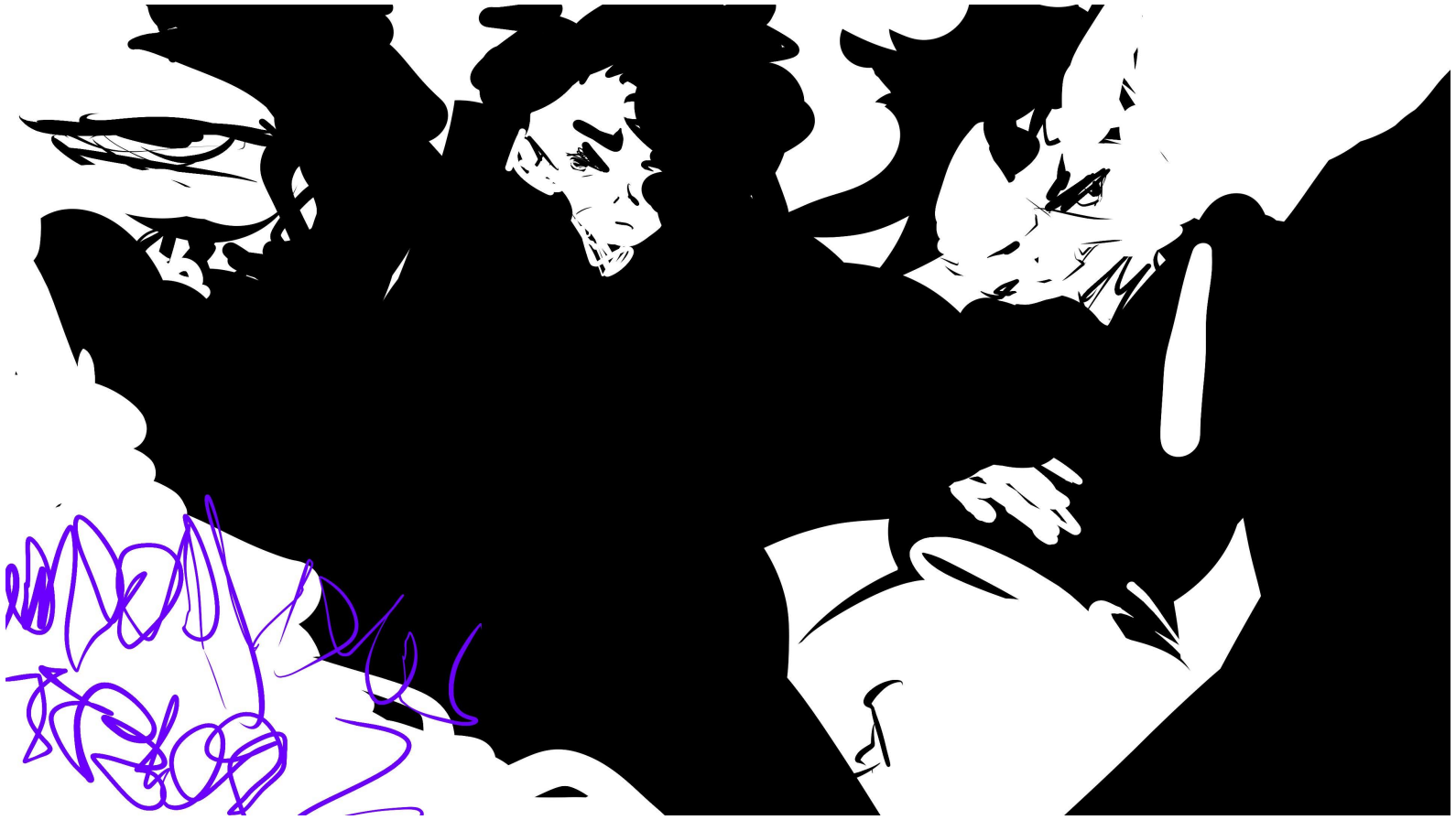
LACRIA

Magazine

Locria Magazine is a zine by Ian/ Iana Spencer



✨NEURO✨DIVERSITY

Hot take: i don't think it's that autistic/ADHD brains aren't "deficient" per se, i think it's that the deficiencies of the neurodivergent brain - like a lack of stress management and difficulty doing certain tasks consistently - are more personal and affect the neurodivergent person themselfs as well as their immediate support system of loved ones, whereas the deficiencies of the neurotypical brain - like mob mentally, potentially having flexible morals in a given social situation, and a inate inability to process information in mass - aren't rly problems for them as individuals, but can and often do negatively society as a whole, since neurotypicals are often very good at convincing each other to believe and keep believing idiotic, often hateful things that they should otherwise no better than to do.

Ofc, both have benefits, some of which can make up for this. Neurodivergent ppl's blight of overprocessing information means we generally learn more quickly and are far more hardwired for critical thinking rather than an anticritical self-imposed groupthink and means we don't take things for granted, whereas neurotypicals inability to process that much information at once makes their lives much less stressful, and they can communicating things with each other without nessessarily having to

fully understand how they're communicating that with so little information

But i kinda have to wonder why the conversation is always around ADHD or Autistic ppl when neurotypicals struggles, unlike ours, are felt not by them, but on society as whole. as per writing this ive been having a days long autistic shutdown, and it sucks and I wouldn't wish this experience on anyone neurotypical or otherwise, but why are we talking about me when the neurological issues of those without a disorder are causing society stagnation and regression?

PSYCHO PATROL R (EARLY ACCESS) REVIEW

A Deeply Weird Game Seemingly for me in particular

While Psycho Patrol R coins itself as an Immersive Sim, and has it's backbone in that genre, playing it, in practice, feels more like playing an quasi-Orwellian version of Morrowind. The dialog system, - a

component of the game just as important as the mech combat - of course, obviously takes direct inspiration from the third TES game, and it's small but rich open-world, but there's also more subtle ways this game borrows from it - ways that are difficult to put into words by their abstract nature.

Psycho Patrol, as mechanically dense as it is, is not a conventional CRPG. Skills and Attributes are streamlined into a simple stats system. XP ⟨at the time of writing⟩ is swapped out for Euros, the same setting-appropriate in-game currency

you use for buying equipment or mech parts or cigarettes.

But This isn't to say Psycho Patrol R doesn't have deep RPG mechanics, but it is to say it's CRPG-esque depth is in unconventional places. For instance: The damage of specific guns, for instance, is not a set number or even an RNG-based range, but is instead calculated based on the weight of the round, the velocity of the muzzle, and the distance at which it was shot.

This sort of physicality-turned-RPG mechanics is extremely common in Psycho Patrol, in various forms.

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While you're SPEED and AGILITY stats affect how fast you move and how high you jump respectively, both of those things are also affected by how much weight you're carrying, which is calculated into a percentile called you're “load”. You're totally load, as presented by the computer in the garage at HQ (where you can change out you're equipment and mech parts at any point) refers to the load you carry when piloting you're mech, which is effected by the weight of the parts of you're mech, the weight of the equipment you have on your person, and the weight of you're mech's legs (heavier legs can carry more weight, but also weigh more themselves and potentially move more slowly).

All of this is, to put it bluntly, is extremely my jam.

I've seen many games attempt to "reinvent" CRPGs, and I've seen just as many fail, ultimately ending up as shallow games who's developers, however well-intentioned, ultimately failed to understand what makes CRPGs special. Psycho Patrol R actually succeeds in doing this, taking what's at the core of what makes oldschool PC RPGs special - deep, interconnecting mechanics with crunchy calculations and a well-written narrative built with quest design in mind - and tackles these design philosophies in a new, compelling way.

On the subject of RPG narratives, oh boy, does this game have a good one.

Ville Kallio's sardonic wit is on display here. Much like Cruelty Squad, PPR is a darkly comedic satire of systemic ills, this time focusing on authoritarian regimes and fascism, maintaining the "terminally online" meta-humor and punk-rock venom of it's predecessor.

Psycho Patrol R is set in “Pan-Europa”, a crumbling police state encompassing the entirety of Europe. You play as a Psycho Patrol officer, a newly founded police force hoping to prevent the fall of Pan-Europa by eliminating so-called “psycho-hazards” - a pseudo-scientific that's somewhere between a thought crime and manifesting-brain chaos magick.

The main quest, appropriately, is absurdist and entirely farcical. You're boss, Lorenzo, wants you to investigate one such psycho-hazard involving Sodium Laryl Sulfate, a chemical in hygiene products used for foaming, with rumors spreading around that it may cause cancer.

While I've yet to finish the main quest ⟨and I'll admit I had the whole thing spoiled before I even started playing⟩, it's clear from very early on that the actual story of you investigating this “psycho-hazard” ⟨in other words, the actual activity of the quest⟩ isn't actually what's

important to the narrative here. Rather, it's everything surrounding it. The existence of the Psycho Patrol, despite being the whole premise of the game, is clearly a farcical last ditch effort to salvage this crumbling fascistic regime, one that's becoming more and more bureaucratic, and one that you're boss, the head of police, has deluded himself in believing in. To add on top of this, there's this clever bit of purposeful disconnect between the protagonist and player. The unnamed protagonist is less like a traditional video game protagonist and more like J. Edgar Hoover as a cop. A violent, deeply closeted gay man with poorly-repressed feelings for his boss, who heavily overcompensates with a hyper-macho persona, and who's violent actions are possibly him funneling his internalized homophobia by abusing his power as a cop, something the psycho patrol are systemically allowed to do. It's heavily implied he used to be a cocaine dealer, a drug that's a legal grey area in Pan-Europa, but as

heavily normalized as forcibly mutant humans, in lieu of now mostly extinct animals, into “human-animals” - vaguely-animal-shaped body horror abominations that I could best describe as “the polar opposite of a anthropomorphic animal” - and cops crushing people with their mechs.

FINAL THOUGHTS - This game is absolutely my jam, and if you like weird games, mechanically in-depth and dialog-rich RPGs, Cruelty Squad and game's that kick your ass, you'll likely like it, but it's certainly not for everyone.